

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for converting the load compartment of a vehicle into a tank for carrying liquids, wherein the load compartment has an upper edge defining an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

a removable cover assembly configured to engage said upper edge and cover the upper opening of the load compartment so as to convert the load compartment into the tank, wherein the inside of the tank is defined by the inner surfaces of the load compartment and the cover assembly; and

a discharge conduit coupled to the cover assembly through which liquid contained in the load compartment can be removed.

2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising at least one latch mechanism for releasably latching the cover assembly to the load compartment.

3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the load compartment is a dumping hopper.

4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a sealing member for positioning between the load compartment upper edge and the cover assembly.

5. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for converting the load compartment of a vehicle into a tank for carrying liquids, wherein the load compartment has an upper edge defining an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

a removable cover assembly configured to engage said upper edge and cover the upper opening of the load compartment;

a discharge conduit coupled to the cover assembly through which liquid contained in the load compartment can be removed; and

a pump carried by the cover assembly and having an inlet and an outlet, the outlet of the pump being fluidly connected to the discharge conduit, the pump configured to discharge liquid contained in the load compartment through the discharge conduit.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the discharge conduit extends at least partially inside the cover assembly.

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the cover assembly defines an opening for introducing liquid into the load compartment.

8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the cover assembly has a top wall and a portion of the discharge conduit extends inside the cover assembly within a plane that is substantially parallel to the top wall of the cover assembly.

9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for converting the load compartment of a vehicle into a tank for containing liquids, wherein the load compartment has an upper edge defining an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

a cover adapted to engage said upper edge and cover the upper opening so as to convert the load compartment into a tank for retaining liquid ~~contained in the load compartment~~; and

a pump carried by the cover for discharging liquid contained in the load compartment.

10. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for converting the load compartment of a vehicle into a tank for containing liquids, wherein the load compartment has an upper edge defining an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

a cover adapted to engage said upper edge and cover the upper opening for retaining liquid contained in the load compartment; and

a pump carried by the cover for discharging liquid contained in the load compartment;

wherein the cover has a top wall with an upper and lower major surface and the apparatus further comprises a discharge manifold supported proximate the lower major surface of the top wall.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising at least one latch assembly for releasably latching the cover to the load compartment.

12. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for converting the load compartment of a vehicle into a tank for containing liquids, wherein the load compartment has an upper edge defining an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

a cover adapted to engage said upper edge and cover the upper opening for retaining liquid contained in the load compartment; and

a pump carried by the cover for discharging liquid contained in the load compartment;

wherein the cover defines openings adapted to receive the forks of a forklift.

13. (Original) An apparatus for converting the load compartment of a vehicle into a tank for containing liquids, wherein the load compartment defines an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

a removable cover assembly configured to cover the upper opening of the load compartment, the cover assembly having at least one latch mechanism for releasably latching the cover assembly to the load compartment;

a pump carried by the cover assembly for removing liquid contained in the load compartment; and

a discharge conduit having a first end in fluid communication with an outlet of the pump and a second end positioned to discharge liquid from the load compartment.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the discharge conduit has a portion that extends within the interior space of the cover assembly.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 further comprising a back-flow preventer and an inlet conduit having a first end fluidly connected the back-flow preventer and a second end fluidly connected to an inlet of the pump.

16. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for converting the load compartment of a vehicle into a tank for containing liquids, wherein the load compartment defines an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

means for covering the upper opening so as to convert the load compartment into a tank ~~and for retaining liquid contained in the load compartment;~~ and

means for removing liquid contained in the load compartment.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the means for covering the upper opening of the load compartment is configured to form a liquid-tight seal with the load compartment.

18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the means for covering the upper opening of the load compartment is releasably latchable to the load compartment.

Claims 19-21 (Cancelled).

22. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for converting the dumping hopper of a loader into a tank for carrying liquids, wherein the hopper defines an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

a removable cover assembly for covering the upper opening of the hopper so as to convert the hopper into a tank for containing liquid; and

wherein when the cover assembly is positioned to cover the upper opening, a substantially liquid-tight seal is formed between the cover assembly and the hopper.

23. (Original) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the cover assembly is configured to be releasably latchable to the hopper.

24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 22, further comprising a pump carried by the cover assembly for discharging liquid from the hopper, the pump having an inlet and an outlet.

25. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for converting the dumping hopper of a loader into a tank for carrying liquids, wherein the hopper defines an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

a removable cover assembly for covering the upper opening of the hopper;

wherein when the cover assembly is positioned to cover the upper opening, a substantially liquid-tight seal is formed between the cover assembly and the hopper;

a pump carried by the cover assembly for discharging liquid from the hopper, the pump having an inlet and an outlet; and

an inlet conduit and an outlet conduit, the inlet conduit having a first, inlet end and a second end fluidly connected to the inlet of the pump, and the outlet conduit having a first end fluidly connected to the outlet of the pump and a second end positioned to discharge liquid from the hopper.

26. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for converting the dumping hopper of a loader into a tank for carrying liquids, wherein the hopper defines an upper opening, the apparatus comprising:

a removable cover assembly for covering the upper opening of the hopper;

wherein when the cover assembly is positioned to cover the upper opening, a substantially liquid-tight seal is formed between the cover assembly and the hopper; and

support legs for supporting the cover assembly in a substantially horizontal position when the cover assembly is removed from the hopper.

27. (Currently Amended) A method for carrying liquid in an open-top load container of a vehicle, the method comprising:

covering the open top of the load container with a cover so as to convert the load container into a tank for containing liquid and so that a substantially liquid-tight seal is formed between the cover and the load container; and

introducing a liquid into the load container through an opening in the cover.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27 further comprising removing liquid from the load container with a pump.

30. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein covering the open top of the load container further comprises latching a cover to the load container.

31. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a pump carried by the cover assembly and having an inlet and an outlet, the outlet of the pump being fluidly connected to the discharge conduit, the pump configured to discharge liquid contained in the load compartment through the discharge conduit.

32. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 31, wherein the discharge conduit extends at least partially inside the cover assembly.

33. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for converting the load compartment of a vehicle into a tank for carrying liquids, wherein the load compartment has an upper opening, the apparatus comprising a removable cover configured to form a substantially liquid-tight seal around the upper opening of the load compartment so as to convert the load compartment into a tank for and retaining liquid contained in the load compartment.

34. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the cover comprises:
a top wall;
side walls extending downwardly from the top wall;
a front wall extending downwardly from the top wall;
a rear wall extending downwardly from the top wall; and
an open bottom defined by the top wall, the side walls, the front wall, and the rear wall.

35. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the cover further comprises a peripheral flange connected to the side walls, the front wall, and the rear wall and configured to engage the load compartment around the upper opening.